

Guilty Pleas on Dover Motel Murder

Guilty Pleas on Dover Motel Murder

Store robberies, rape, hospital embezzlement, health care fraud cases also resolved

Darren Weiford, a 23-year-old Dover man, pled guilty to Murder Second Degree and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony for shooting and killing a woman last year. Weiford, a 23-year-old Dover man, shot and killed his girlfriend Amber Buckler, 20, while she lay in bed in a Dover motel room on June 1, 2017. Deputy Attorneys General Lisa Whitelock and Dennis Kelleher prosecuted the case. Weiford faces 18 years to life when sentenced by a Superior Court judge in January 2019.

A 30-year-old Wilmington man received a 28-year prison sentence for robbing more than a dozen convenience stores. Kori Thomas pled guilty in April 2018 to 2 counts of Robbery First Degree and one count of Attempted Assault Second Degree. Thomas had been initially charged with robbing 13 convenience stores throughout New Castle County in the spring of 2017. A Superior Court judge sentenced Thomas as a habitual offender to 28 years in prison, followed by diminishing levels of probation. Thomas is a habitual offender because of previous convictions on weapons and burglary offenses. Deputy Attorneys General Timothy Maguire and Danielle Brennan prosecuted the case with support from DOJ social worker Crystal Pitts and paralegal Julie Caputo.

Deputy Attorneys General Zachary Rosen and Jillian Schroeder secured a 15-year prison sentence for a man convicted of robbing three north Wilmington area convenience stores on the same day. In April 2017, Eric Hubbard, 58, of Wilmington, robbed the Wawa in the 2600 block of Philadelphia Pike, the BP/Shore Stop in the 700 block of Philadelphia Pike, and the 7-11 in the 4800 block of Governor Printz Boulevard. In each of the hold ups, Hubbard implied that he had a gun. Hubbard pled guilty in July 2018 to 3 counts of Robbery First Degree. A Superior Court judge sentenced Hubbard to 15 years in prison, followed by 6 months of either home confinement or work release, then 2 years of probation.

Stephen Scott, 34, of Elsmere, faces at least 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to rape charges. Deputy Attorneys General Jenna Milecki and Amanda DiLiberto, secured the plea from Scott to 2 counts of Rape Second Degree, 1 count of Sexual Abuse by a Person in a Position of Trust Second Degree, 1 count of Unlawful Sexual Contact Second Degree, and 1 count of Child Abuse Third Degree. DOJ paralegal Jayna Quillen and social worker Claudia Melton assisted in the case. An investigation found that from September 2016 to January 2018, Scott repeatedly raped one child in his care, engaged in unlawful sexual contact with another child, and physically abused other children in his care. Scott faces between 20 and 61 years in prison when sentenced by a Superior Court judge in March. Scott must also register as a Tier 3 sex offender.

A 49-year-old Lewes woman has been sentenced to prison for embezzling money from her employer. From February 2017 to May 2017, Hope Abram, the revenue director at Beebe Hospital in Lewes, requested refund checks for fictitious persons at made-up addresses. When the checks were returned she deposited them into her own account. Abrams pleaded guilty to Theft

Greater than \$100,000 and was immediately sentenced to 25 years, suspended after serving 2 years in prison, followed by home confinement. She must also pay \$201,451 in restitution and has forfeited 3 automobiles and 3 motorcycles purchased with the illicit funds. Deputy Attorneys General Stephen McDonald and Michelle Whalen of the Consumer Protection Unit prosecuted the case. Detective Jonathon Moyer of the Lewes Police Department was chief investigating officer.

Sachin Karnik, a former therapist, pled guilty to Health Care Fraud. Throughout March 2017, Karnik, 47, of Newark, fraudulently submitted claims to Medicaid for counseling sessions while his license to practice social work was suspended. Upon taking Karnik's plea, a Superior Court judge immediately sentenced Karnik to 2 years in prison, suspended immediately for 1 year of probation plus 40 hours of community service. Karnik acknowledged the conviction will be reported to the United States Office of Inspector General, and he agreed to permanent revocation of licenses from the Board of Clinical Social Work Examiners and the Board of Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Professionals. Deputy Attorney General Christina Kontis of DOJ's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit prosecuted the case, with special investigator James Armstrong and auditors Ellen Yates and Jaime Richards assisting in the investigation.